DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 421 465 SP 038 034

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TITLE Self-Perceived Levels of Responsibility in Seventh Grade Students.
PUB DATE 1998-06-17
NOTE 25p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Grade 7; Grade 8; Junior High School Students; Junior High Schools; Secondary School Teachers; Self Concept Measures; *Student Attitudes; *Student Responsibility; *Teacher Attitudes; Teacher Expectations of Students; Teacher Student Relationship

ABSTRACT

This study, conducted at Churchill Junior High School in Royal Oak, Michigan, examined the effectiveness of the Student Responsibility Profile (SRP)and investigated the attitudes of eighth grade students and teachers toward the SRP. The profile allows staff members to evaluate student responsibility performance in 10 areas and allows students to self-evaluate themselves in each teacher's classroom. The study explored levels of student responsibility as scored on the SRP and the amount of agreement or disagreement in teacher and student opinions regarding the SRP. A group of 140 eighth grade students participated, along with 23 teachers and 2 administrators. Participants completed the SRP and the 10-item Student/Teacher Opinion Survey, which measured their opinions about the SRP. Results indicated that students who evaluated themselves tended to take more responsibility for behavior and learning. Teachers believed that students were responsible overall, but students did not agree. Both students and teachers thought that teachers generally agreed with students on the SRP and did not have to change ratings very often. Students and teachers did not think that boys were rated higher in responsibility than girls, but boys believed that girls were rated higher than boys. Most teachers thought that students were concerned about the SRP, while most students were not concerned. The two profiles are appended. (Contains 15 references.) (SM)

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ED 421 465

Self-Perceived Levels of Responsibility In Seventh Grade Students

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Royal Oak, Michigan

June 17, 1998

SP038034

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Abstract

Student responsibility is an important aspect of a child's education throughout the school years. Self-evaluation, student-led conferences, and use of daily calendars are some of the methods by which students and teachers work together to promote student responsibility. Student and teacher attitudes about the Student Responsibility Profile disagree in major areas of ratings and level of responsibility. Teachers are very conservative when rating students on their areas of responsibility.

Self-Perceived Levels of Responsibility

In Seventh Grade Students

The Student Responsibility Profile is used as a tool to evaluate student achievement in ten different areas of student responsibility at Churchill Junior High. The Student Responsibility Profile was generated by the Responsibility Committee for the NCA accreditation process. The philosophy of the staff at Churchill Junior High School is that, (a) each student is responsible for his or her own behavior; (b) it is the staff's responsibility to guide students in expected behavior; (c) encourage maximum student effort; (d) and report observations through the use of the Student Responsibility Profile. The teaching staff at Churchill Junior High School teaches students to become responsible people and to make good decisions. The staff believes they can offer learning experiences to develop lifelong skills which students will use to ensure future success.

The goal of the Student Responsibility Profile is to promote student responsibility through self evaluation and teacher feedback. The Student Responsibility Profile is designed to increase the students' level of responsibility in ten specific areas over the course of a school year. The premise of the Student Responsibility Profile is that for students to be successful in all aspects of their lives, teachers must help them make responsible choices. In addition, the Student Responsibility Profile teaches students the skills needed to be successful in today's society and that of the future.

Students need to see how their daily choices affect themselves and those around them. Students also need to understand that assuming responsibility for one's own

actions is a crucial part of their developmental process. It is a life skill that is practiced, learned, and used daily by people who are able to manage their lives and meet the challenges of a changing society.

The Student Responsibility Profile has been used in all classes and replaced citizenship on the report cards. The elimination of citizenship grades on the report card has caused the faculty to change report card formats. Citizenship type items are now included on the Student Responsibility Profile in greater detail and additional comments may be made. Students have the opportunity to provide input into the profiles three times during the school year. They evaluate themselves on the profile using a rating scale of 1-4, with one being the highest, and return it to the teacher. The teacher then reviews the student assessment on the profile, adds comments, changes the assessment if necessary, and then signs it.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine the effectiveness of the Student Responsibility Profile and to examine attitudes of students and teachers towards the Student Responsibility Profile. This study will explore the levels of student responsibility as scored on the Student Responsibility Profile and the amount of agreement or disagreement in student and teacher opinions regarding the Student Responsibility Profile. It is important to understand how students and teachers feel about the Student Responsibility Profile to improve the way it is administered and used. Students may not be honest in rating themselves and teachers may not be marking students consistently due to gender bias. The data will be examined for

discrepancies in the student and teacher evaluation. Student perception of the Student Responsibility Profile will be examined to determine if there are differences in the attitudes of male and female students towards the Student Responsibility Profile ratings. Teacher opinions will be compared to student opinions to determine differences in attitudes. If there are differences and if there are negative attitudes toward the profile, then adjustments will be necessary to maximize its effectiveness.

Review of Literature

Learning is a big responsibility for a student to accept, yet most students do not take this responsibility seriously. Promoting student responsibility for their behaviors, as well as accountability for their learning is a goal in education. Therefore, students need to understand the importance of being responsible for their academic development and learning life skills. Personal responsibility goals could assist students in refining the skills that will lead to greater autonomy and self-reliance later on in life (Hackmann, Kenworthy, and Nibbelink, 1995).

Theories Behind Student Responsibility

Glasser (1984) developed Control Theory as a way to explain why people behave as they do. Control theory states that people will behave or act in certain ways to get what they want out of life. Glasser (1984) says that people are motivated to behave in ways that help them satisfy the five basic needs: survival, love and belonging, power, freedom, and fun. He goes on to say that if current behavior does not fill one of a student's basic needs, he or she will create a new behavior because people continually behave to fulfill one or more the five basic needs. In other words, our needs drive our

behaviors. However, Glasser cautions that we choose the behavior that we believe will meet our needs. These behaviors can be responsible, such as turning in homework assignments on time or irresponsible, turning assignments in to the teacher late, or not at all. But, we make the choice that suits our needs regardless of how others may assess our choice.

Glasser (1990) says that teachers must first behave in ways towards students that makes the students feel cared about and gives them a sense of belonging. Teachers must also allow students to have some power, by fulfilling their needs and desires and incorporating them into their learning. According to Glasser (1990) teachers need to learn how to be lead-managers instead of boss-managers so they can provide for students a need-satisfying environment. Teachers who lead-manage students to engage in the learning process produce students who enjoy learning. Lead-management in contrast to traditional boss-management allows students to make more decisions in the classroom, rather than expecting students to simply comply with the teachers' rules and procedures. Because teachers model learning, students are more inclined to engage in cooperative behaviors. Thus, it behooves teachers to find methods that effectively allow students to make better choices in their life by giving them opportunities to make decisions and solve their own problems (Glasser, 1990).

Fay (1995), a former principal, developed his own theory about teaching students with Love and Logic. Love and Logic teaches students to be more responsible and holds students to higher standards of behavior (Fay and Funk, 1995). Responsible behavior in the classroom includes bringing the proper materials to class each day,

interacting with students and teachers in an appropriate manner, and turning in assignments on time. When consequences of irresponsible behavior are applied to a student with empathy, a much better self-concept is developed in students. Fay calls this principle, Consequences with Empathy, and when this principle is applied properly, students learn to be more responsible for their own behavior. The consequences of the student's actions do not always have to immediately follow the behavior.

In other words, the consequences should be congruent to the misbehavior, not a form of punishment or revenge. The student needs to be able to verbalize how the behavior resulted in the consequence. He or she should never be able to describe the consequence as someone else's exacting a penalty. For example, if a student has been disruptive and needs to be excluded from the class activity, he or she must understand that it is a natural consequence to be removed so that others can learn. But, equally important, he or she must have the realization that returning to class activities is only dependent upon his or her willingness to be a part of the class. The teacher does not determine the time spent in exclusion, only the offending student makes the choice.

Fay (1995) believes that it is important to let the consequences do the teaching. Most students will become less emotional with a "cooling off" period. By allowing the passage of time, the student will be more open to discussing an appropriate solution with the teacher. The consequences then become the teaching tool, when applied with empathy and with student input. Thus, responsibility is taught with Love and Logic, while keeping the students' self concept intact.

Student-Led Conferences

Student-Led conferences promote student responsibility by allowing the student to be part of the conferencing process. A special format is used in which the students are just as prepared as the teacher, allowing an exchange of information between parent, teacher, and student. Attendance, behavior, and quality of work are some of the things that the student must be prepared to discuss. One of the goals included in the student-led conferencing process is to enable students to accept responsibility for their academic studies (Hackmann, et al. 1995). Including the student in the conferencing process could radically improve the success factor for the student. Hackmann et al. (1995) found that the success of student-led conferences promoted an increase in the number of parents who attended conferences. Student-Led conferencing does more than just change the format of the conferencing process; it also generates more positive school-community relations. In addition, student-led conferences produce greater success because they empower students to lead the conference and assume greater control over their academic growth (Hackmann, 1996).

Self Evaluation

Many researchers have concluded that self-evaluation has far more value than evaluation by others because it focuses students on the process of correcting their own behavior (Rhode, Morgan, & Young, 1983; Smith, Young, West, Morgan, & Rhode, 1988; Sweeney, Salva, Cooper, & Talbert-Johnson, 1993). However, Kim and Sugai (1995) warn that self-evaluation by itself was not significant in promoting students' behaving responsibly in class. One of the techniques that Kim and Sugai recommend is self-

recording and self-observation. Students need to be trained to record their own behaviors on a tally sheet while they watch themselves on videotape. They say that self-recording with self-observation is probably one of the most positive influences in changing students' inappropriate behaviors (Kim and Sugai, 1995). Glasser (1990) suggests that students who self-evaluate their school work as well as their behavior get more meaning out of the learning experience and take more time to do quality schoolwork. Further, these students set their own expectations. Another researcher found that college students seem to enjoy self-evaluation more than traditional evaluation and that they have to work harder to meet their own standards (Edwards, 1989).

Tools for Teachers

The importance of teaching responsibility to students is an accepted principle by schools and society. But often, responsibility is taught as part of the unwritten curriculum of school communities. Educators know that whenever we want students to learn, the concepts must be explicitly taught and practiced. The S.T.A.R. program, developed by Brooks (1989) is a school wide program that explicitly promotes Success Through Accepting Responsibility. The S.T.A.R. program teachers responsibility in an organized fashion. The principal's handbook for S.T.A.R. outlines planning and implementation strategies for a principal of a school to produce a school environment where students find success in their life by acting responsibly.

For any responsibility strategy to be successful it must be implemented school wide. Then the school community can expect a positive and dramatic change in student

behaviors (Brooks, 1989). There are programs similar to the Love and Logic method for teachers that promote student responsibility and can be used in classroom situations as intervention programs (Allen & Stevens, 1994; Berman & LaFarge, 1993; Canfield & Siccone 1993). These programs can teach social responsibility to a student as a member of a larger society, or they can be used as mini lessons and interventions.

Another method that has been effective for increasing student responsibility is the use of daily calendars (Flores, Schloss, and Alper, 1995). Through planning and organizing obligations and requirements, students can monitor their own accomplishments by keeping track in a daily assignment book. They found that the percentage of obligations met or completed increased when students are properly trained in how to use the daily calendars to record their accomplishment of assigned tasks (Flores, Schloss, and Alper, 1995).

Hypothesis

The main hypothesis for this educational study is: If student scores accurately reflect the level of responsibility of students at Churchill Junior High School, then the opinions surveyed will correspond to the scores on the Student Responsibility Profiles. The self-perceptions of the students should correspond to the perceptions of the teachers in both the scores of the Student Responsibility Profile as well as the attitudes and opinions of students and teachers.

Methodology

Background

Churchill Jr. High School is located in Royal Oak, Michigan and has a total population of 383 students in the seventh and eighth grades. Students in Royal Oak come from mostly white, middle class families who reside in neighborhood communities. Many of the families of students at Churchill Jr. High School are single parent homes, with the mother as the primary caregiver. Students who live within the community are white non-Hispanic in origin and come from middle to lower class families. The staff is of middle class origin with many of the teachers being veterans of twenty or more years of service to the school district. Staff members are all white, with more female teachers than male teachers within the building. There is not much ethnic diversity within the school among the students and the staff.

Subjects

Students from eighth grade science classes were randomly selected to participate in the survey. A total of 140 randomly selected profiles were used in the analysis of the Student Responsibility Profile scores, 70 male students and 70 female students. There were a total of 140 students randomly selected to participate in the opinion survey, 70 male students and 70 female students. Teachers were also surveyed to determine their opinions. Of 30 surveys distributed, a total of 23 were returned. Two administrators also responded to the survey. The survey distributed to the students and the staff was the same. Staff results were not separated into male and female categories because it is

not within the scope of this study to investigate whether or not teachers were biased by their own gender.

Instrumentation

The Student Responsibility Profile (See Appendix A) is a tool designed by the members of the Churchill staff to evaluate student responsibility performance on ten specific items. The Responsibility Profile is unique in that it allows the student to self-evaluate him or herself in each teacher's classroom and for the teacher to evaluate the student as well. The ratings for responsibility performance are 1= Outstanding, 2= Good, 3= Needs Improvement, and 4= Unsatisfactory. The lower the student score, the higher the responsibility level, and vice versa.

The survey (See Appendix B) was developed by the researcher to examine teacher and student opinions about the Student Responsibility Profile. The survey has ten statements to which the participants were asked to either agree or disagree. Statements on the opinion survey examine whether or not students rate themselves honestly and whether students take the Student Responsibility Profile seriously. Gender specific questions are designed to determine whether or not boys believe they are rated higher than girls, and vice versa.

Statements on the opinion survey also examined teacher's ratings on the Student Responsibility Profile. Survey items asked teachers if there was a tendency to increase ratings or decrease ratings and if there was a tendency to favor boys over girls. The same survey was distributed to students and teachers. The Student/Teacher opinion survey is different from the Student Responsibility Profile. It is important to note that

the ten items on the opinion survey were different from the ten items found on the Student Responsibility Profile. The ten items on the Student Responsibility Profile rate the students' perceived level of responsibility, while the Opinion Survey measures opinions about the Student Responsibility Profile.

Procedure

Student Responsibility Profile data was collected from a random sample of 140 students. All of the students who participated in the survey completed the responsibility profiles in all of their classes, but only the academic areas of mathematics, science, world geography, and English were used for this study. Students were given the opportunity to evaluate themselves in the "S" column on the Student Responsibility Profile and teachers marked their evaluations in the "T" column. Student scores are the ratings that the student marks down first on the Student Responsibility Profile. Teacher scores are the ratings that the teacher marks down, if any. Student scores are carried over to the teacher scores if the teacher agrees with the students' self-evaluation by simply signing the profile. The evaluations for the third marking period were analyzed for a total student average score and a total teacher average score. An analysis of the averages for boys' scores and girls' scores can be found in Table 1. The student data was also analyzed to see how often teachers increased the grade, or decreased the grade (Charts 2 & 3).

Opinion surveys were distributed on Thursday, February 6, 1997. Student and teacher surveys were tabulated and counted for a percentage of agreement and disagreement of the ten items that were present on the survey (See Appendix B). The

percentages of the survey are found in the tables. Teacher results are compared with the total student response (table 2). Student responses are then separated into male and female categories to show the differences in response to the survey items based on gender (table 3).

Results

Table1: Average Analysis of Student Scores

Girls	Student Scores	Teacher Scores	Boys	Student Scores	Teacher Scores
Average	63	63	Average	70	72
Median	63	63	Median	69	70
Mode	64	65	Mode	84	69
Min	86	89	Min	110	106
Max	42	43	Max	41	52

Chart 1: Average Change Percentage

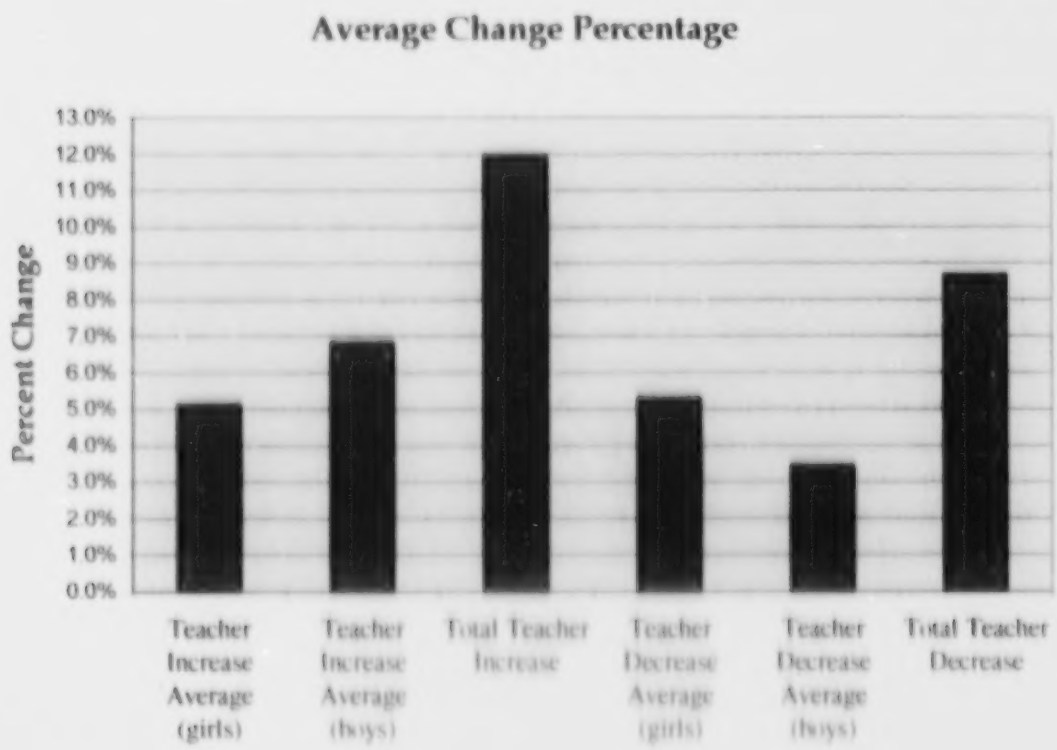

Chart 2: Percentages of Rating Changes (Girls)

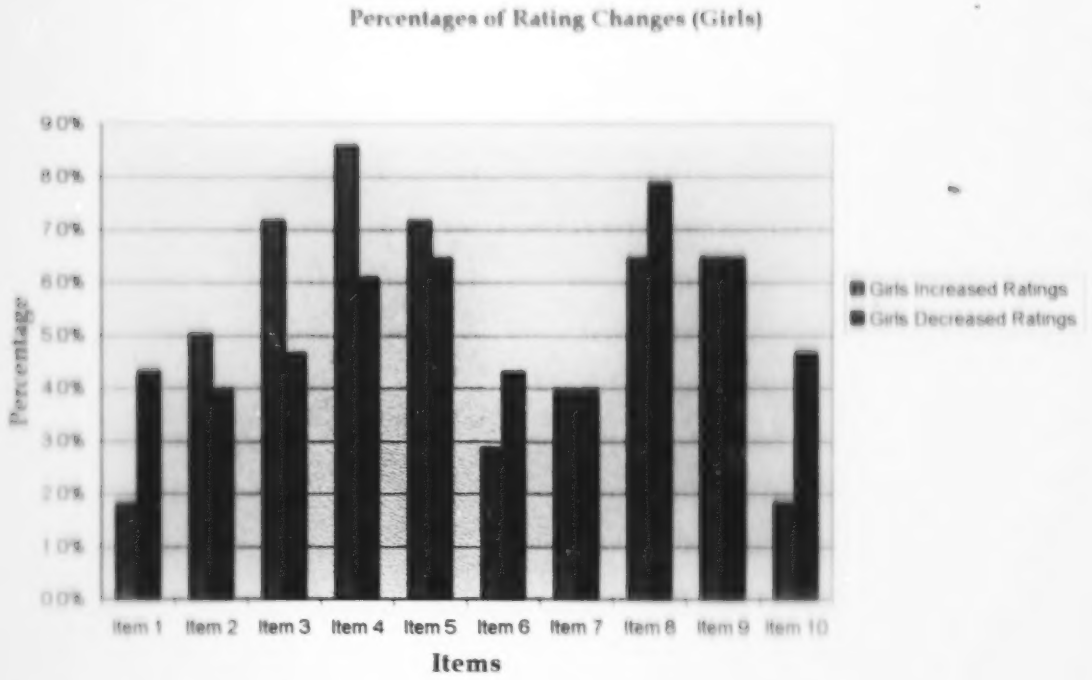

Chart 3: Percentages of Rating Changes (Boys)

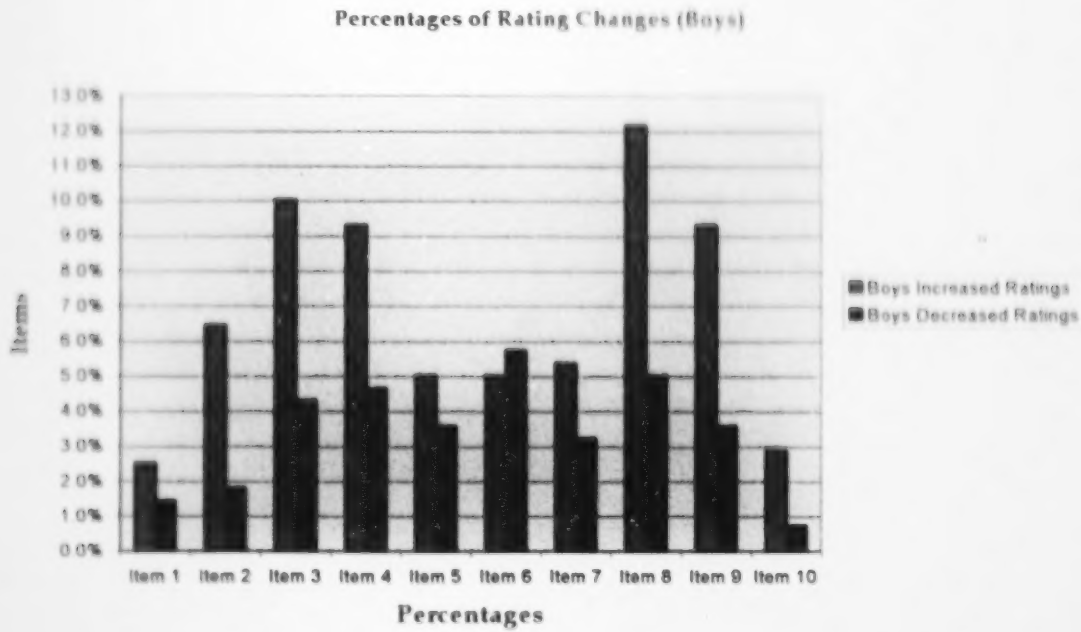

Table 2: Student Opinions vs. Teacher Opinions

	Teacher Results		Student Results	
Item Number	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
1	78%	22%	60%	40%
2	57%	43%	19%	81%
3	39%	61%	39%	61%
4	9%	91%	6%	94%
5	87%	13%	76%	24%
6	52%	48%	64%	36%
7	26%	74%	21%	79%
8	83%	17%	58%	42%
9	57%	43%	42%	58%
10	87%	13%	48%	52%

Table 3: Male Opinions vs. Female Opinions

	Male Student		Female Student	
Item Number	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
1	62%	38%	58%	42%
2	17%	83%	22%	78%
3	52%	48%	27%	73%
4	12%	88%	0%	100%
5	72%	28%	80%	20%
6	73%	27%	55%	45%
7	25%	75%	17%	83%
8	47%	53%	70%	30%
9	45%	55%	38%	62%
10	45%	55%	52%	48%

The average analysis (Table 1) indicates the average responsibility score for four classes. If a student were to score all "1's" (outstanding) on all of the items in four classes, the student score would be equal to 40. The lowest score possible for a student with low responsibility would be 160, receiving "4's" (unsatisfactory) in all categories for all classes. So the range of possible scores is from 40 (high) to 160 (low) for students.

Self-evaluated scores of all students that participated in the survey range from 41 to 110. Teachers evaluated scores range from 43 to 106.

Teachers changed the ratings on student scores an average of 10.2 % of the time for boys and 10.4 % of the time for girls. Chart 1 shows the average change percentages of students' ratings by the teachers. When looking at Table 1, it can be seen that the boys' ratings are higher than the girls' scores in most of the student and teacher categories. It is important to note that the lower the scores, the higher the responsibility level for the student. The average scores for the girls was 63 (student and teacher). The average scores for the boys were 70 (student) and 73 (teacher). The percentage of rating changes of students' ratings by teachers show the differences between increased ratings and decreased ratings in charts 2 & 3.

There are some significant differences in the responses to the survey. In item one, most teachers (78%) felt that student's grade themselves honestly on the Student Responsibility Profile, while only 60% of students felt that they grade themselves honestly. On item two, there is a large discrepancy between the students and the teachers. More than half (57%) of the teachers felt that students are concerned about the ratings on the profile, while 81% of the students disagreed, and felt that students do not take the Student Responsibility Profile seriously. On item three, 61% of teachers and students disagreed that girls are rated higher than boys while 39% of students and teachers agreed with the statement. There is also a large difference between the responses of the males and the females. Females disagreed (73%) with the statement that girls are rated higher than boys, while approximately half (52%) of the boys agreed

with that statement. There was a fair amount of disagreement with the statement that boys are rated higher than girls are on the Student Responsibility Profile from both the teachers and the students. The girls disagreed 100% that boys are rated higher than girls. There was a general agreement from both sides on item five. Most teachers (87%) and students (76%) agreed that teachers generally agree with the students on the Student Responsibility Profile. The fact that students and teachers agree together on this item would indicate that most students are fairly honest when rating themselves on the Student Responsibility Profile.

The responses to item 6 were fairly evenly split among the teachers and students. Most students agreed (64%) that teachers are more likely to mark a student down on the Student Responsibility Profile than mark them up. It is interesting to note that 73% of the male students agreed with this statement while only 55% of the female students agreed. Both students and teachers disagreed (74% teachers; 79% students) with the statement that teachers are more likely to mark a student up on the Student Responsibility Profile than mark them down. This would indicate that teachers are very conservative when grading students on the Student Responsibility Profile and reluctant to mark ratings up. There was a large amount of agreement among the teachers (83%) that students should set goals for themselves over the course of the year. Student responses were fairly evenly split, with 58% of the students agreeing and 42% of the students disagreeing. It is interesting to note the discrepancy between the male students and the female students. The girls agreed (70%) significantly higher than the boys (47%) on this item. The original goal of the Student Responsibility Profile was to teach

students to become more responsible over the course of the school year. The responses to item nine would indicate that some students improve while others do not learn to become more responsible over the course of the school year. Item ten is interesting to note that 87% of the teachers agreed that students in general are responsible people at Churchill Junior High School, while only 48% of the students agreed with the same statement. This would indicate that most (52%) of students do not think that they are responsible people while in school.

Discussion and Conclusions

Students that evaluate themselves tend to take more responsibility for their behavior and learning since they are the ultimate judges. Teachers believe that students are in general, responsible people in the school. Students who were asked the same question do not appear to think so. Both students and teachers think that teachers generally agree with students on the Student Responsibility Profile and do not have to change ratings too often. Students and teachers do not think that boys are rated higher in responsibility than girls. However, boys do agree that girls are rated higher than boys. The responses on item two on the survey causes the greatest amount of concern to the Student Responsibility Profile Committee. Most teachers think that students are concerned about the Student Responsibility Profile, while many of the students are not concerned. This would indicate that students do not take the evaluations on the Student Responsibility Profile very seriously. This attitude is not acceptable to the Responsibility Committee.

The Student Responsibility Profile is a positive instrument for giving students the opportunity to self-evaluate themselves. Perhaps the next step at Churchill Junior High School in the area of responsibility would be to introduce student-led conferences in order to promote increased responsibility of students. Student-led conferences may be a positive method of increasing the level of responsibility perceived by the students and the staff. Another way to increase the level of responsibility among the students would be to provide more opportunities for students to self-evaluate in their academic classes. Perhaps if students were responsible for evaluating their own work, they may exhibit more responsibility towards their academic work.

Implications for Further Study

The data and analysis of this study provides excellent information for the school staff to improve the Responsibility Profile. It could also provide information on areas for improvement, such as Student-led conferences. The NCA responsibility committee could revisit some of these opinion items and determine the next course of action. Possible strategies might include a responsibility campaign in the next school year, or a change in some of the items on the Student Responsibility Profile. It is the hope of this author that the information provided in this study will improve the learning tool for the students to help increase the level of student responsibility within Churchill Junior High School.

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Appendix A

CHURCHILL RESPONSIBILITY PROFILE

IT IS THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE STAFF AT CHURCHILL JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL THAT EACH STUDENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR HER/HIS OWN BEHAVIOR. IT IS THE STAFF'S RESPONSIBILITY TO GUIDE STUDENTS IN EXPECTED BEHAVIOR, ENCOURAGE MAXIMUM EFFORT, AND REPORT OBSERVATIONS.

CLASS_____HR_____STUDENT_____GRADE____

TEACHER_____ DATE 1st REPORT_____

2nd REPORT_____

POWER HOUR _____ 3rd REPORT _____

IT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS PROFILE TO CLARIFY THE REPORTING SYSTEM OF STUDENT BEHAVIOR AND EFFORT IN THE SCHOOL SETTING.

1- THE STUDENT FIRST HAS THE OPPORTUNITY FOR SELF-EVALUATION (MARKED WITH AN "S").

2- THE TEACHER THEN REVIEWS THE PROFILE AND ADDS HER/HIS OPINION TO THE PROFILE (MARKED "T")

3- IF THE TEACHER IS IN TOTAL AGREEMENT WITH THE STUDENT EVALUATION, HE/SHE WILL SIMPLY SIGN THIS FORM.

1=OUTSTANDING 2=GOOD 3=NEEDS IMPROVEMENT 4=UNACCEPTABLE

		1st		2nd		3rd	
A Responsible Churchill Student....		**S**	**T**	**S**	**T**	**S**	**T**
1. Arrives promptly at the beginning of class.	1.	___	___	___	___	___	___
2. Is prepared for class.	2.	___	___	___	___	___	___
3. Completes assignments when due.	3.	___	___	___	___	___	___
4. Understands and follows rules and procedures.	4.	___	___	___	___	___	___
5. Is self-motivated.	5.	___	___	___	___	___	___
6. Willingly participates in activities and projects.	6.	___	___	___	___	___	___
7. Participates in class discussions.	7.	___	___	___	___	___	___
8. Demonstrates self-control.	8.	___	___	___	___	___	___
9. Acts appropriately with adults and students.	9.	___	___	___	___	___	___
10. Does not use put-downs or "killer statements".	10.	___	___	___	___	___	___
STUDENT AND TEACHER INITIALS		___	___	___	___	___	___

COMMENTS _____

PLEASE CALL IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS. SCHOOL PHONE 588-5050

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Appendix B

Student Responsibility Profile Survey
Student/Teacher

In an attempt to improve the Student Responsibility Profile, the Responsibility Committee would like your opinion on the following survey of questions.

	AGREE	*DISAGREE*
1. Students grade themselves honestly on the Student Responsibility Profile.	❑	❑
2. Students are concerned about the grades on the Student Responsibility Profile and take it seriously.	❑	❑
3. Girls are graded higher than boys on the Student Responsibility Profile.	❑	❑
4. Boys are graded higher than girls on the Student Responsibility Profile.	❑	❑
5. Teachers generally agree with the students on the Student Responsibility Profile.	❑	❑
6. Teachers are more likely to mark a student down on the Student Responsibility Profile than mark them up.	❑	❑
7. Teachers are more likely to mark a student up on the Student Responsibility Profile than mark them down.	❑	❑
8. Students should set goals for themselves on the Student Responsibility Profile.	❑	❑
9. Students learn to become more responsible during the course of the school year.	❑	❑
10. Students in general are responsible people at Churchill Jr. High.	❑	❑